

Claims

- [c1] 1. A method for providing rebates to automobile owners based on purchases made at participating retailer locations, the method comprising: selling an automobile to a customer wherein the customer is provided with a customer identification badge containing a plurality of customer information; retrieving the customer information stored within the customer identification badge at a point of sale; transmitting point of sale purchase information and the customer information to a rebate processing center remote from the point of sale; and providing a rebate to the customer wherein the rebate is calculated based on the purchase information.
- [c2] 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the customer identification badge expires after a predefined time interval.
- [c3] 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the customer identification badge comprises a magnetically encoded wallet card.
- [c4] 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the customer identification badge comprises a bar code.
- [c5] 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the customer identification badge comprises a persistent memory module having input and output capabilities wherein the module is attached to the automobile.
- [c6] 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the rebate comprises a check mailed to the customer at quarterly annual time intervals.
- [c7] 7. The method of claim 1 wherein the rebate is electronically deposited into a bank account specified by the customer.
- [c8] 8. The method of claim 1 wherein the purchase information comprises a rebate amount that a participating retailer is willing to pay.
- [c9] 9. The method of claim 1 wherein the retailer provides payment to the rebate processing center to pay for the rebate.

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- [c10] 10.The method of claim 1 additionally comprising transmitting the customer information from the automobile dealership to the rebate processing center.
- [c11] 11.The method of claim 1 wherein the automobile is leased to the customer.
- [c12] 12.The method of claim 1 wherein the automobile is rented to the customer.
- [c13] 13.A system for providing rebates to automobile owners based on purchases made at participating retailer locations, the system comprising:
a first computer configured to encode a customer identification badge with customer information pertaining to a customer who has purchased an automobile;
a second computer at a participating retailer location, the second computer configured to:
(i)retrieve the customer information from the customer identification badge at a point of sale; and
(ii)transmit the customer information and point of sale purchase information to a third computer at a rebate processing center; and
a third computer at a rebate processing center, the third computer configured to:
(i)receive the point of sale purchase information and the customer information from the second computer; and
(ii)generate a rebate for the customer wherein the rebate is based on the purchase information.
- [c14] 14.The system of claim 13 wherein the customer identification badge is configured to expire at a predefined time period after it is encoded.
- [c15] 15.The system of claim 13 wherein the customer identification badge comprises a magnetically encoded wallet card.
- [c16] 16.The system of claim 13 wherein the customer identification badge comprises a bar code.
- [c17] 17.The system of claim 13 wherein the customer identification badge

comprises a persistent memory module having input and output capabilities wherein the module is attached to the automobile.

- [c18] 18.The system of claim 13 wherein the third computer is additionally configured to facilitate electronic direct deposit of the rebate into a bank account specified by the customer.
- [c19] 19.The system of claim 13 wherein the purchase information comprises a rebate amount that the participating retailer is willing to pay.
- [c20] 20.The system of claim 13 wherein the second computer at the retailer location is additionally configured to facilitate the retailer's electronic payment to the rebate processing center for the rebate.
- [c21] 21.The system of claim 13 wherein the first computer is additionally configured to transmit the customer information to the third computer at the rebate processing center.
- [c22] 22.The system of claim 13 wherein the first computer is configured to encode a customer identification badge with customer information pertaining to a customer who has leased an automobile from the dealer.
- [c23] 23.The method of claim 13 wherein the first computer is configured to encode a customer identification badge with customer information pertaining to a customer who has rented an automobile from the dealer.